

VILLAGE OF HOMEWOOD  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025  
VILLAGE HALL BOARD ROOM

CALL TO ORDER: President Hofeld called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 7:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Hofeld led trustees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Clerk Nakina Flores called the roll. Those present were Trustee Vivian Harris-Jones, Trustee Julie Willis, Trustee Jay Heiferman, Trustee Patrick Siemsen, Trustee Phillip Mason, Trustee Lauren Roman, and Village President Richard Hofeld.

President Hofeld introduced staff present: Village Manager Napoleon Haney, Village Attorney Chris Cummings, Fire Chief Bob Grabowski, Police Chief Denise McGrath, Director of Finance Amy Zukowski, Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros, Director of Public Works Joshua Burman, Assistant Village Manager Terence Acquah, Assistant Director of Finance Lindsay Cabay, Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development Noah Schumerth, and Assistant Director of Public Works Patrick DiDiana.

MINUTES: The minutes of July 12, 2025 were presented. There were no comments or corrections. The public hearing minutes of July 12, 2025 were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion was made by Trustee Roman and seconded by Trustee Heiferman to approve the minutes as presented.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Mason, Roman. NAYS – None.**

CLAIMS LIST: The Claims List in the amount of \$723,929.49 was presented. There were no questions from the Trustees.

A motion was made by Trustee Siemsen and seconded by Trustee Harris-Jones to approve the Claims List as presented.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Mason, and Roman. NAYS – None.**

President Hofeld said two items totaled 60 percent of the Claims List: \$340,000 to the City of Chicago Heights for water and \$95,000 to Thorn Creek Sanitary District.

PRESENTATION: President Hofeld issued a proclamation honoring Joshua Carillos for his contributions to Economic and Community Development through his unpaid internship with the Village of Homewood.

OATHS OF OFFICE: The Village Clerk administered the Oath of Office for the position of Police Officer to Giovanni Lopez, Lucas Huerta, and Hailey Gibbs.

**HEAR FROM THE AUDIENCE:** Resident Mike Dickover requested that the fine range for dogs off leash violations be changed from \$25 to \$750 to \$150 to \$750 to match surrounding towns. Mr. Dickover referenced information from personal research to justify the increase.

Resident Amy Crump read passages from the book “On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century” by Timothy D. Snyder which emphasizes that individuals must actively participate as citizens to uphold democracy and citizenship requires a commitment to the institutions that support democracy. Amy invited the audience to participate in the Workers over Billionaires Labor Day rally and march scheduled for September 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 a.m. in Chicago at the Haymarket Memorial sculpture in the West Loop.

**OMNIBUS VOTE:** The board was asked to pass, approve, authorize, accept, or award the following item(s):

- A. MC-1089/Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment/Sign Code: Pass an ordinance approving a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to add Section 44-10, the Village Sign Code; amend Subsection 44-04-14 to classify murals and public art installations as accessory structures subject to accessory use and structure requirements; and, amend Section 44-07 to establish development review procedures for sign permits, sign variances, comprehensive sign plans, appearance reviews, and public art and mural reviews.
- B. Collective Bargaining Agreements/Metropolitan Alliance of Police Chapter 621 and Chapter 622: Approve a three-year collective bargaining agreement between the Village of Homewood and the Metropolitan Alliance of Police Chapter 621 (patrol officers) retroactive to May 1, 2025, and extending through April 30, 2028; and, approve a three-year collective bargaining agreement between the Village of Homewood and the Metropolitan Alliance of Police Chapter 622 (sergeants) retroactive to May 1, 2025 and extending through April 30, 2028; and, approve a corresponding cost-of-living adjustment for non-union Village employees retroactive to May 1, 2025.
- C. Collective Bargaining Agreement/American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees: Approve a three-year collective bargaining agreement between the Village of Homewood and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 31, Local 2891, retroactive to May 1, 2025, and extending through April 30, 2028.
- D. M-2365/Disposal of Surplus Property/Electronic Equipment: Pass an ordinance authorizing the Village Manager to sell, trade-in, or dispose of two (2) pieces of electronic equipment listed as surplus property.
- E. M-2366/Increase of Liquor Licenses/Mitchell and Michaels Hospitality LLC/18031 Dixie Highway: Pass an ordinance increasing the allowed number of Class 4A liquor licenses by one for Mitchell and Michaels Hospitality LLC for their location at 18031 Dixie Highway, subject to successful completion of the application requirements for a Village of Homewood liquor license, including approved background checks.
- F. R-3232/Redevelopment Agreement/Beyond Books/18063 Dixie Highway: Pass a resolution authorizing the Village President to enter into a redevelopment agreement to provide financial assistance from the non-TIF Business Incentive Program in the amount of \$23,007 for improvements including remodeling the interior and adding an ADA accessible bathroom to the building at 18063 Dixie Highway.

- G. R-3233/Redevelopment Agreement/18065 Harwood Avenue: Pass a resolution authorizing the Village President to enter into a redevelopment agreement with Fred Sierzega to provide financial assistance from the non-TIF Business Incentive Program in the amount of \$1,739 for building improvements including replacing the air compressor for the fire sprinkler system at 18065 Harwood Avenue.
- H. Contract/Downtown Tree Grate Replacement/C&T Lawn Care, Inc.: Waive competitive bidding due to utilizing a vendor currently under contract; and, award a contract to C&T Lawn Care, Inc. of Lynwood, IL in the amount of \$48,350 for the conversion of 45 tree rings and the installation of porous pave along Dixie Highway and a portion of Martin Avenue.
- I. M-2367/Intergovernmental Agreement/Transfer of Property/Homewood-Flossmoor Park District/18335 Pierce Avenue: Approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$5,000; and, pass an ordinance authorizing the Village President to enter into an intergovernmental agreement between the Village of Homewood and the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District facilitating the transfer of the property at 18335 Pierce Avenue to the Village of Homewood for the amount of \$5,000.
- J. Purchase Approval/Crack Sealing Machine/Crafco, Inc.: Waive competitive bidding due to purchasing through a joint governmental or cooperative purchasing program; and, authorize the purchase of one (1) 2025 Crafco Super Shot 60 Diesel asphalt crack sealing machine from Crafco, Inc. of DeKalb, IL in the amount of \$60,581.40.
- K. Purchase Approval/Ford Expedition/Ford of Homewood: Approve the purchase of one (1) 2025 Ford Expedition from Ford of Homewood, of Homewood, IL, the lowest bidder, in the amount of \$49,661; and, approve the purchase and installation of lighting, accessories, painting, and equipment for an estimated total amount of \$79,661.

Before the omnibus vote, President Hofeld invited comments. Trustee Willis, Heiferman, and Roman said they are looking forward to the opening of Mitchell and Michaels and Beyond Books. Trustee Heiferman pointed out that it was a tremendous staff effort to finish the collective bargaining agreements. He also thanked volunteers and staff for their work on the much needed update to the sign code. Trustee Siemsen congratulated staff on resolving the MAP contracts.

Item F: The owner of Beyond Books, Tania Davis Ph.D., spoke about serving the community with her new bookstore which will have a podcast studio, youth books, and book clubs. She stated that her bookstore should be open at the end of September 2025. Item E: The owners of Mitchell and Michaels shared an update about cosmetic changes they are making to the inside of the facility. The owners are expecting to open at the end of September 2025 with family dining and a full-service bar. Item L: President Hofeld explained that the acquired property would be used to establish a community garden at the 18335 Pierce Avenue location. The property will be transferred from the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District to the Village of Homewood for \$5,000.

A motion was made by Trustee Mason and seconded by Trustee Roman to approve the Omnibus Report as presented.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Mason, and Roman. NAYS – None.**

**OLD BUSINESS:** There were three (3) proposals submitted as part of a closed bid process for the Village-owned property (former Delanoe's Pizza) at 18155 Dixie Highway as presented by Director of Economic and Community Development Angela Mesaros. Bawadi Construction proposed to purchase the property for \$15,000 with the intent to establish a Mediterranean restaurant. Mike Hussain proposed to purchase the property for \$50,000 with the intent to establish an Indo Pak Dhaba restaurant. Eric Baker proposed to purchase the property for \$1,000, intending to establish a "soft play" facility for children under seven years old.

The Staff Review Committee evaluated the three proposals using a five-pronged criteria of: (1) Supports suitable and successful uses, (2) Maximizes yield, (3) Improves property conditions, (4) Ensures sustainable commercial development, and (5) Responds to community needs. Based on this criteria, Bawadi Construction consistently led in each criteria scoring including zoning accommodation, relevant and recent resume of similar projects, investment and improvements to the property, maximum yields, and meeting the needs of the community.

The Staff Review Committee requested that the Village Board direct staff to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement and a redevelopment agreement with one of the proposed restaurant developers.

Mr. Bawadi, the owner of Bawadi construction, was the only developer of the three submittals that was present at the meeting. He explained that he plans to bring a high-end Middle Eastern full-service restaurant with improvements to the inside and outside of the building. He plans to bring a coffee shop to the space next door in the future, once he acquires the space. He shared that his areas will be very clean and nice for the community. He referenced his co-ownership of a coffee shop and pizza shop in other towns.

A motion was made by Trustee Siemsen and seconded by Trustee Mason to direct staff to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement and a redevelopment agreement with Munir Bawadi to redevelop the Village-owned commercial property at 18155 Dixie Highway.

**Roll Call:** *AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Mason, and Roman. NAYS – None.*

**NEW BUSINESS:** Director of Finance Amy Zukowski and other staff members (Village Manager Napoleon Haney, Director of Public Works Joshua Burman, Assistant Village Manager Terence Acquah, Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development Noah Schumerth) collectively presented a new revenue stream opportunity in the form of a 1% non-home rule local sales tax that would provide funding for infrastructure, pension obligations, and capital needs for the Village. By having this additional sales tax it would change the Village's Sales tax rate to 10% which is the average sales tax rate of a majority of both home rule and non-home communities in Cook County. Village Manager Napoleon Haney said Governor Pritzker gave non-home rule communities the ability to pass an ordinance to implement a 1% sales tax increase without requiring a referendum process.

Assistant Director of Economic and Community Development Noah Schumerth explained that The Retail Coach was hired to obtain consumer data which found that 88% of the Halsted Street corridor sales tax revenue is generated by non-Homewood residents. Across all shopping corridors, projections indicate that 85% of the estimated \$3.5M of additional revenue generated by this new tax would come from non-resident consumers. Director of Public Works Joshua Burman and Assistant Village Manager Terence Acquah explained that this tax would help with the Village's

capital plan needs, assist in bridging a financial gap in the Village's pension obligations, and assist in the \$70 million Lead Line Replacement mandate from Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Staff requested direction to move forward with the implementation of a 1% non-home rule local sales tax by bringing an ordinance for consideration at the September 9, 2025 Board meeting. Finance Director Amy Zukowski shared that the ordinance must be filed with the State of Illinois by October 1, 2025 in order for the sales tax to go into effect January 1, 2026.

President Hofeld said the Village Board would discuss bond strategies at a later time but he supports the sales tax increase.

Resident Amy Crump asked why a sales tax increase be needed if the Village planned to increase water rates. She also wanted to know if the community would have input on where the funds would be allocated; voicing her support to fund the 183<sup>rd</sup> Street road diet program. Village Manager Napoleon Haney responded that all projects listed in the five-year capital plan would be prioritized based on their critical need.

The Board thanked staff for their group presentation. Trustee Heiferman said it would be foolish not to support this tax. Trustee Mason asked if the pension funds would be 100% funded if the \$1.6M gap in the Police and Fire pension fund were to be filled. Attorney Chris Cummings, who is a member of both pension boards, explained that paying the \$1.6M debt to the pension boards would solve only one part of the problem. There would still need to be a solution to fill the levy collection gap that would be ongoing. Trustee Siemsen articulated that the sales tax increase would be a unique opportunity to recoup some of the Village investments that were made to the creation of the Halsted Street corridor.

A motion was made by Trustee Heiferman and seconded by Trustee Willis to direct staff to implement a 1% non-home rule local sales tax by preparing an ordinance for consideration at the September 9, 2025 Board meeting.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Mason, and Roman. NAYS – None.**

**GENERAL BOARD DISCUSSION:** Trustees thanked residents for coming out to the meeting. The Board also congratulated all the new police officers and wished them the best.

**ADJOURN:** A motion was made by Trustee Mason and seconded by Trustee Roman to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

**Roll Call: AYES --Trustees Harris-Jones, Willis, Heiferman, Siemsen, Mason, and Roman. NAYS – None.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nakina Flores  
Village Clerk



**PUBLIC COMMENTS –  
for the Tuesday, August 26, 2025 Board Meeting**

From: mitzi johnson  
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2025 6:55 PM  
To: PublicComments  
Subject: Fw: Homewood sidewalks in Homewood Estates

Hello I am a concerned resident of Homewood and this email was sent in June to the mayor and Trustees. To this date I have not received a reply at all. Would appreciate it if this would be shared at the next meeting.

Subject: Homewood sidewalks in Homewood Estates



Hello it would be of great appreciation if this could be shared at the next meeting. Since I never received a reply when this email in June of 2025.

Dear Mayor and Trustees of Homewood,

As a concerned taxpayer and resident of Homewood Estates, I am writing to request transparency, and accountability regarding the condition of our community and the use of public funds.

It is deeply frustrating to see cannabis dispensaries and a casino operating within our town- generating substantial revenue- yet there is no visible investment from these funds back into our neighborhoods. Specifically, our streets and sidewalks are in poor condition, particularly in residential areas like Homewood Estates.

Meanwhile, the business district and areas surrounding the casino are well-maintained, creating a stark and troubling contrast.

In our neighborhood, sidewalks have been crudely ground down to reduce trip hazards, leaving them in disrepair and visually unappealing. In some areas, blacktop has even been applied to sidewalks- a temporary fix that reflects neglect, not investment. This kind of patchwork maintenance sends a clear message: the residential areas are not a priority, despite the high property taxes we are paying.

These high taxes should translate into real improvements- resurfaced roads, replaced curbs, and safe, well-maintained sidewalks. The current state of our infrastructure is unacceptable. Furthermore, I question the reasoning behind allowing a casino, such as Wind Creek, to be established here. Casinos are known to extract wealth from the communities they're placed in rather than reinvest in them. Why was this allowed, and where is the revenue going? It certainly doesn't appear to be benefiting the residents.

Neighboring communities like Tinley Park- though smaller- maintain their infrastructure at a higher standard, even with comparable tax rates. They are replacing curbs, resurfacing streets, and prioritizing upkeep in a way that Homewood is clearly not.

We deserve to know:

- . Where is the cannabis and casino tax revenue going?
- . Why aren't these funds being used to lower the tax burden or reinvest in infrastructure ?
- . Why are patch jobs being prioritized over proper repairs?
- . When can residents expect meaningful improvements to the streets and sidewalks? As taxpayers, we deserve transparency. We deserve Investment in our neighborhoods.

And we deserve answers.

Sincerely,

Concerned Homewood Resident.